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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 000997

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [YM](#) [DEMARCHE](#) [DEMOCRATIC REFORM](#) [ECON](#) [COM](#) [ENERGY](#)

SUBJECT: IRYANI RECEIVES DEMARCHE ON DEMOCRACY CHARTER

REF: A. SECSTATE 52683

[1](#)B. SANAA 966

[1](#)C. SANAA 420

Classified By: Ambassador Thomas C. Krajeski for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. On April 18 Ambassador delivered ref a demarche to Presidential Counselor, former Prime Minister Dr. Abdul Karim al-Iryani, and Deputy Foreign Minister, Mustapha Noman. Iryani also briefly discussed the recent ROYG rejection of the Hunt Oil drilling rights extension (ref. b). End Summary.

Demarche Delivered:

[1](#)2. (C) In an April 18 meeting with Ambassador, Iryani reiterated his intention to create a Middle East Democracy Charter and Center as he discussed with Undersecretary for Global Affairs, Paula Dobriansky during her visit to Yemen last February (refs a, c). Iryani showed Ambassador a draft of the Latin American Democracy Charter, which also included a model for a Democracy Center. He told Ambassador that he intended to translate the document in order to present his ideas to President Saleh.

[1](#)3. (C) Iryani explained that he expected Saleh and the ROYG to "give their blessing" to the charter and center since there would be no "official" involvement. Instead, the intention is to make the NGO community the "main push" behind the project and to work closely on an international front with the National Democratic Institute, Democracy Assistance Dialogue, National Endowment for Democracy and "No Peace without Justice," an Italian NGO. He also stated that he would work with domestic NGOs that feature human rights or democracy reform as part of their mandate.

Comment on Hunt Oil

[1](#)4. (C) Iryani also commented on the April 5 Cabinet decree supporting Parliament's decision to reject an extension of American company, Hunt Oil's drilling rights in Block 18 (ref. b). "I am very concerned," he told Ambassador, "this will kill Yemen investment for tens of years." Ambassador explained that Post was not currently involved with the Block 18 case. (Note: In a prior meeting with Ambassador, Wyndell Caviness, Vice President and General Manager of Yemen Hunt Oil, asked that Post not advocate on Hunt's behalf. End Note). (Ref. B). "I may stick my nose in once more to warn versus arbitration," Iryani replied, alluding to his past involvement in Block 18 matters. He said that the situation had not been well explained to Parliament and that he had recommended to Saleh that the extension be allowed to stand.

[1](#)5. (C) Iryani then turned to the ROYG's USD 2.5 billion agreements on liquid and natural gas (LNG) with a consortium of companies including Kogas (the Korean Gas Company), Total Oil Company and the Yemen Natural Gas Company (owned partially by Yemen Hunt). Iryani noted that those agreements, "were safer today than a month ago," since a high-level General People's Congress (GPC) meeting, chaired by Saleh, committed to protecting them. Noman added that the rejection of the extension was in fact not under Parliament's jurisdiction.

Follow-up: Iryani Will Attend Conference

[1](#)6. (C) On April 19, Iryani called Ambassador to confirm that he would attend the Community of Democracies (CD) Conference in Santiago, to be held April 28-30. He noted that he just received an invitation to the conference and that the GOC would provide him with an entry visa upon his arrival.

[1](#)7. (C) Action Request and Comment: As the region begins to slowly embrace reform, the idea for a Democracy Charter and Center is promising. However, Iryani's concept is still not fully thought out. Post will continue to take opportunities to encourage Iryani to pursue his ideas and recommends that Department interlocutors do the same. The DAD and November Forum for the Future will be good opportunities to create

momentum for ROYG, NGO and regional endorsement of the concepts. However, we should proceed with caution to assure that, before implementation, the Charter has true political will behind it. End Action Request and Comment.

Krajeski